Puberty

[841] 881 Menstruation was called paiya'hən (pai'ya, blood; lit., "to be blooding"). A little ceremony was made for a girl at the termination of her first menses. J.A. recognized her own puberty as neglected due to disrupted native life; however, her mother made "a little party" for her after her first menstrual period. She was washed, and dressed with beads and earrings for the first time. She abstained from meat throughout the ensuing month and for six days of her next period. Then she was washed with a decoction of "some kind of weeds" and was permitted to eat meat. She was informed that to eat meat at this time would cause a hard ball to grow in her abdomen and that, if she attempted to steal meat to eat in secret, she would die. J.A. regretted that she had not been sent out to swim at night as part of her puberty training or taught "to mind her dreams" as she should have been.

Marriage

584 591 A young man went to a girl's house and remained there if she accepted him. For about a year he hunted and helped his father-in-law. Then the couple removed to his parents' home where, if there was room, they remained permanently. The function of the moiety in marriage is discussed under "Social Organization."

582 613 The lineage was primarily a nuclear exogamous group and secondarily, the moiety. Though it was usual to marry without one's moiety it was not compulsory, as is evidenced by the genealogies. No cousin marriage was permitted, and a couple known to be remotely related could not marry without unfavorable comment.

On Tachi marriages and affinal usages Gifford has some remarks.

[606] The term nukatmin means "my relation." Mother-in-law and father-in-law tabus were in force. There was also a partial tabu against a man talking to the wife of any man he called agas (mother's brother, mother's brother's son, etc.). Cross cousin marriage was not practiced, though it was said that anciently it was and that a man might marry either his mother's brother's daughter or his father's sister's daughter. I have no genealogical evidence to support this statement.

Death

764 [152] The Tachi informant had lost a grandson about a year before my visit and wept when mourning ceremonies were discussed, although the child's mother, one of the interpreters, showed no outward distress. Consequently no information on death or burial was obtained from the Tachi or Chunut informants, beyond the

292 encompass the head, and tied with strings at the back of the head. These strings were sometimes wound around the hair which had been pulled into a bunch at the nape.

Personal care---Both sexes brushed the 302 hair daily with a soaproot brush. Men would do 515 this in the morning if they had no immediate work. Women more often brushed and arranged their hair in the early afternoon after returning from seed-gathering, pounding acorns, or other arduous work. For washing hair, chips of [388] dried soaproot were put in a large basket of warm water. This was done at the creekside if possible and the hair was rinsed in running water. Normally the hair was not washed while swimming.

754 Both sexes took care in the disposal of hair which, if found by a malicious shaman or by an evil person who would take it to a shaman, could be used for contagious magic. (How this was accomplished M.L. could not say.) Women hid their hair combings until a large bunch had collected, then took this to a spring of water where it was buried under a stone. To do this not only ensured safety from magic but aided the hair on the head by causing it to grow [826] more luxuriantly. Combings were not burned because this would cause the living hair to fall out prematurely. Menstruants scratched the [841] head with a stick; otherwise the hairs would split and fall out.

Spittle was covered over to protect it from shamans.

826 Nail "parings" (if any) were not protected. Some people tore off nails but most kept them ground down by rubbing them on a small water-rolled stone. A woman, particularly an old one, might let a left thumb- or big-toenail grow excessively. This served as an instrument in shelling nuts, seeds, splitting basket materials, or even as a personal weapon. When such a nail broke off, it was left anywhere.

M.L. recounted the following of her maternal grandmother who had a long toenail.

826 One of Ju''ulneš' daughters had married a man who was a reckless gambler. He lost every-539 thing. Then he played the chip and pole game with a man, bet his wife as the stake, and lost her. The men became angry and began to fight. The old woman, looking on, was very mad at her son-in-law whom she already despised as worthless. She grabbed some ropes of ča and [presumably with the help of the man's opponent] succeeded in tying up the culprit. Then Ju'ulneš picked up some stones and hit him. As he fell she kicked him and cut his penis with her long toenail. She was so pleased with her success that she kept her nail long thereafter.

292 Ceremonial dress---The fundamental parts of ceremonial regalia, usually worn by shamans when engaged in public dances or rituals, were the feather headdress and feather skirt. Additional ornaments of feathers, skins, beads,

[text continues on p. 69]

meat tabu was observed. Girls who drank cold water and ate meat got overly fat.[243] Like M.L., M.P. said "girls followed the moon, and boys the sun," but added that "girls were always sick on the full moon," which is, of course, impossible. Girls gauged the expected arrival of their periods by the condition of the moon from month to month, as explained by M.L. In the old days, said M.L., a menstruant cooked for the family as usual, but she slept on the opposite side of the house from her husband and intercourse was strictly tabu.

During adolescence both boys and girls were sent to swim at night. The informant J.B. gave this practice a name, pa´duwiš, and defined it more rigorously than others. For thirty nights during the coldest, frostiest weather (December-January), a lad or young girl was sent out three times each night, once just after he had fallen asleep, again halfway through the night, and again near dawn just before the other members of the household would be arising for their own swim. The youngster who slept soundly was given a vigorous poking until he got up and went out. The swimmer ran back wet to prove he had immersed himself; he dried and warmed himself by the low fire and jumped back into his bed. The purpose of these efforts was to produce a physical and mental hardiness. After adolescence a person of character continued the practice, though not quite so rigidly, i.e., one dip a night was sufficient. It took some fortitude on the part of the parent who himself must waken to see that his sons or daughters were roused each night three times: J.B. said, "old men sometimes lost their children because they wouldn't see that they did this right each night." People often did the same thing in the summertime and those who did "never got sick." Such bathing was of an extra and special sort: it was taken as a matter of course that one swam at daybreak every day merely as a matter of decent behavior and personal cleanliness.

J.B. added that every man talked to his own children, especially his sons, telling them how to behave, to be industrious, and to be respectful toward supernatural manifestations. Both boys and girls learned their duties and techniques of work from their father and mother by association, emulation, and specific instruction.

Marriage.

The only regulation of marriage was a restriction based on blood relationship. All Wukchumni informants claimed that a relationship as distant as third-cousinship was a tabu to matrimony. A marriage with such a relative

[243] M.P. attributed the obesity of a certain old woman, who was obviously tumorous, to infringement of the meat tabu.

[P. 166.b] Kechayi

After the birth occurred, the
846 mother drank only warm acorn soup (li·'m·n) for six days or until the umbilical stump fell off. After that she ate only soups and seed food (lu·'k·n) for two months.

[343] The father was not under any tabus during pregnancy, E.M. believes, but after the birth he ate nothing hard or greasy until the stump came off. He also did no hard work for one moon [month].

● [841 343] There was no separate hut for birth or menses.

844 At the time of birth a girl's own mother or elder sister helped her. She lay on her back during labor (E.M. was uncertain on this [237] point). A bear claw was soaked in water and the liquid was drunk to make hard labor easier. [616] A woman of either moiety could use this. The umbilicus was cut with a sharp bone or clam- [823] shell; flint was tabu, and E.M. never saw a cane knife used. The afterbirth was buried in the ground. The mother lay on the hot bed of ashes only if she were very ill or her back ached.

854 When the baby was born its paternal grand- [603] father brought the first cradle (bi·'·l·č), which had been made by a paternal aunt. This cradle was of soft willows and had a hoop awning.[65] The baby remained on this for two months, at [553] the end of which time it was named, removed to its permanent cradle (ah·'l·č), and the mother was cleansed.

846 When the navel stump fell off it was put in a piece of buckskin and hung with a few strands of beads to the cradle hood for the baby to play with. If the stump were lost, the child would be subject to nausea. When the [856 child left the cradle, the stump was removed 789] from it; for a boy it was placed in an oak tree so he would become a good climber, but for a girl it was put in an anthill to make her industrious.

854 At the end of two months the baby was put 553 on its second cradle, and received a name selected by its paternal grandfather or grandmother. For a boy, the paternal grandfather's name was chosen, for a girl, her oldest paternal aunt's.[66] At the same time a "party" was given for the mother by these paternal relatives -- her husband's family. She was washed, dressed in new clothes, and partook of meat again.

844 The food and working tabus for both parents were observed only for the first child. 846 But the use of the cradles, preservation of the navel stump, and the naming "party" were carried out for all offspring.

845 Twins were thought by some to be a misfortune. This was because of the belief that they were difficult to raise. Before visitors

---

[65] The hoop awning, E.M. explained, is useful only when the infant is supine; cradles of small babies were not stood upright.

[66] [611] A rule more of theory than of practice, as the genealogies indicate. The important point is the emphasis on the male line.

W Y 846 783 the new clothes on her, and any other ornaments which she already possessed. This washing was purely ritualistic, as the woman had bathed that day, as usual, after rising from the hot pit. The meat was cooked and they all, including the father, partook of it. The woman's parents gave the man's parents "about two sacks of acorn meal" (S.O.); gave them acorn meal and blankets (D.). The parents-in-law (ma´kši) stayed all day; they never quarrelled, were always congenial. People came to see the mother and her infant, but there was no singing, dancing, or playing of games. After this ritual the man and wife could sleep together

W Y 352 854 The cradle (akhi·ič), as described by S.O., had a forked stick as foundation. Across this were tied with ša´ cord several horizontal pieces of split wood. On top of this was fastened a stiff mat of twined "chaparral brush" (i.e., the normal Mono-type stiff cradle back). Down each side were a series of buckskin thong loops to carry the string band which held the baby in place. When the baby was about six months old, a shade of twined "chaparral brush" of the fan-shaped Mono type, was affixed to the cradle (pl. 2, b herein).

W Y 854 The baby was first wrapped in an old piece of deerskin or rabbitskin blanket with shredded willow bark, usually the remains of old aprons, laid in as an absorbent. Over this was wrapped another blanket of rabbitskin or a single wildcat skin. The outer wrapping was omitted in warm weather.

Puberty

W Y 881 [856] When a girl's breasts grew large enough for some milk [sic] to be exuded, she stopped eating meat; otherwise she would have large breasts. (D. pointed out a fat young girl who was the result of modern carelessness in this respect.) She must then begin to use a scratching stick on her head, as her hair would break off and be short if she touched it with her fingers. These observances were continued up to and through a girl's first menstrual period and at the two following. There was no separate hut for menstruating women; they did not cook, and intercourse was forbidden. Bathing followed the period.

W Y [841]

On the occasion of the first period a little cleansing ritual (•pla´oša) was made by the girl's parents. She was first washed in the river or creek, then taken home where she was ritually washed from a basket. A new deerskin apron or such ornaments as the family could afford were put on her, and she was given meat to eat. There was no dancing or singing on this occasion, although it was not prohibited in any sense. Neither was there any betrothal or association with a youth.

2: Kroeber E-5 (ca. 1918) 1953
NS29 Yokuts NS29

scalp celebration or victory dance. It can accordingly be concluded that scalping customs were of relatively little moment in Yokuts life.

MONEY.

Ordinary money consisted of strings of shell disks, of the wampum type, *keha*. During the past hundred years the Yokuts derived at least part of their supply of this currency through visits to the ocean. It is uncertain whether such trips were made in purely aboriginal times. The unit of measurement in the north was the *chok*, one and a half times the circumference of the hand. In the south the *chok* was somewhat shorter, and was reckoned as half the *hista*, two times the circumference of the hand.

Long perforated cylinders, perhaps made from the columellæ of univalves or from clams of unusual size, were called *humna* or *humana*, and were exceedingly valuable. They came from the south, probably from the Chumash.

GREETINGS.

There was little or no handshaking before the white man introduced the custom. Kissing was another undeveloped greeting. Mothers kissed their children, and lovers each other in seclusion; but no one else. The usual greeting is *hileu ma tanin*, "where are you going!" An old form, now less used, is, in foothill dialect, *ma-wit hide*, "you, hello"; more literally, "you, where!"

Like some other Californians, the Yokuts call the years "worlds." *P'a'an tanshi*, "world went," denotes the lapse of a year.

BIRTH.

A woman about to give birth sat on the ground grasping a stake set up before her. At the moment of parturition she was raised by an assistant who grasped her from behind. The umbilical cord was tied with one of the mother's hairs, and severed with a knife of cane or elder wood, according to locality. The Chukchansi buried the cord; the Tachi preserved it by having the child wear it over its abdomen.

Husband and wife were under equal restrictions after the birth of a child. They ate no meat or hard food, and did not cook, hunt, work, or touch tools. The Yokuts attached the greatest importance to these observances, some of which were continued until the remnant of the cord dropped from the child's navel, and others for several months.

The monthly condition of women—which was thought to be connected with the dark period of the moon—was viewed with less scrupulous abhorrence by the Yokuts than among many tribes.

2: Kroeber E-5 (ca. 1918) 1953
NS29 Yokuts NS29

There was no separate menstrual hut, nor any dance nor public ceremony at a girl's adolescence. For six days a woman took no meat, fish, or cold water. Some tribes allowed her to cook, work, and stay by the sick; others forbade her to prepare food or to leave the house. The additional observances at puberty were unusually slight, the most regular being the prohibition against the head being scratched with anything but a stick—a peculiarly deep-seated bit of taboo, encountered among Pacific coast tribes as far as Alaska.

NAMES.

The name of the dead could under no circumstances be spoken. For this reason a new appellation was assumed on the death of any namesake. Among the southerly tribes the inconvenience caused by this practice was guarded against by the custom of each child receiving two names, one to be used as a reserve in emergency, as it were. If nevertheless both namesakes died, the person deprived of his designations was spoken of and addressed as *k'amun hoyowosh*, "No-name." Many names are meaningless; some denote animals or objects, such as "Buzzard," "Otter," "Pine nut"; a few are names of tribes, as Pitkachi, Yaudach; many are verbs: "Tap," "See," "Make-fire," "Dead," to which may be added the curious one of "Seven." Almost all names were those of ancestors or older relatives.

DEATH AND MOURNING OBSERVANCES.

The Yaudanchi and Yauelmani buried their dead unless they died at a distance, when they were cremated and the ashes interred in the graveyard of their home town. The underlying idea seems to have been to deposit the remains where the person had lived. All California Indians have strong sentiments on this point; old people will express satisfaction at the prospect of being buried adjacent to the house in which they were born. The Tachi, like some Costanoan groups, burned every one of any account, believing that burial gave wizards an opportunity to steal the hair of the deceased and thus evoke their ghosts; but they also buried the ashes. A group of ancient bodies discovered in the Buena Vista hills, in Tulamni territory, included some skeletons painstakingly wrapped in strings or tules (Pl. 41), and others incompletely cremated before burial. Perhaps they perished in an attacked and burning house. The Chukchansi left the body one night; then four men carried it on a litter to the funeral pyre.

The favorite of Yokuts ritual impositions, the abstention from meat, applied also to mourners for a period of a month. The alleged reasons are that one would be eating the flesh of his child, or kill his second wife. The Yaudanchi absolved the mourner only after he had paid a friend for the privilege; the friend, if the same occasion